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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Newark Mayor Sharpe James today strongly condemned a proposal by the state and federal government to entomb the "lethal" chemical dioxin at an industrial site in the city's Ironbound section where it was discovered nearly four years ago.

The proposed action by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is "unacceptable and unconscionable," according to James, who maintained, "it bears out an unfortunate, prevalent attitude of 'dump it in Newark.'"

"Dioxin is one of the most deadly chemicals known to man," said the Mayor. "It is a substance that we do not want in our city, and the only acceptable solution to me is removal and proper disposal."

He warned, "If DEP has its way and decides to store the waste here in Newark, it will never be removed."

The proposal to entomb the chemical comes four years after the state discovered dioxin on the site of Diamond Shamrock's former plant at 80 Lister Avenue. DEP found levels of dioxin as high as 50 parts per billion (ppb). The federal government considers anything over 1 ppb to be dangerous.

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"Under the DEP proposal, the location, which once supported a major ratable will produce nothing in taxes," said the Mayor, adding, "if the entombment plan is accepted, not only do we have the problem of contaminated material remaining on the site, but we have a piece of property that can never again be used for productive purposes."

City records show the properties held by Diamond Shamrock on the Lister Avenue site to be assessed in excess of \$300,000.

"I am sure that if the corporate officials of Diamond Shamrock lived in Newark instead of Texas, where the company's headquarters are located, the proposed solution would have been different," said James, suggesting, "One solution is to haul the contaminated material for disposal or entombment to Diamond Shamrock's extensive property in Texas."

"Diamond Shamrock is not a poor company. It should assume full responsibility for the contamination they have abandoned in Newark," he contended.

He noted that the firm showed sales and revenues in excess of \$4 billion dollars for 1985, and in 1986 sold off its chemical company to Occidental Petroleum for \$745 million "in cash."

James disclosed that the city has hired an environmental planning consultant to evaluate the DEP proposal and have found the plan to be "deficient."

The consultant, Dresdner, Robin & Associates of Jersey City, report that there are "specific alternatives available for dioxin disposal" and they have not been explored, said the Mayor.

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dioxin add
page 3

"The fact that there is currently no licensed facility to accept this material should not be Newark's problem. Diamond Shamrock should be required to find a licensed facility or develop one itself to handle the disposal problem," James maintained.

He pointed out that federal regulations regarding the exportation of hazardous waste do not contain specific restrictions on the export of dioxin contaminated material, and noted a private facility in West Germany has been reported to accept dioxin-contaminated debris.

"The alternative to off-site disposal or treatment outside the United State is real enough to be deserving of evaluation," he stated.